I soon learned that Mr. Sidd was general manager of the Schraftt stores in Boston and in a little while the three of us were sitting in one of those stores. On the way there Cohen dilated upon his experiences with Ludwig Lewisohn who had lectured about a month ago. From the summary that Cohen gave me of Lewisohn's talk I gathered that he pleaded for the kind of Jewish life I advocate in my talks on Judaism as a civilization, especially for Jewishness in the home even to the extent of recommending specifically the mezuzah, Jewish books, kashrut etc. I congratulated myself on the fact that Cohen had not chosen the other topic I had suggested to him, for then what I would have said would have been merely a repetition of Lewisohn's lecture.

It soon became evident to me that Cohen disapproved strongly of Lewisohn and he was seconded by Sidd. He told of Lewisohn's asking him whether he was expected to speak in a cap. Lewisohn said he had one with him if the audience would want him to wear it. He too had dinner with Cohen at one of the hotels and ordered a porter steak. Yet in answer to a question after the lecture whether he believed in kashrut he said "By all means."

What really is the matter with Lewisohn? Is he sincere, hypocritical or mixed up? If he is a baal t'shuvah he is probably all three and being a literary man he is probably a baal-t'shuvah. But being a literary man he should have known that he was talking to goyish Jews who would laugh at the sight of him talking in a cap.

I could gather from my conversation with Cohen that he wasn't favorably disposed toward me and I suspected that he was telling me all this about Lewisohn in order to get me to hold my horses. I was confirmed in my suspicion when I learned that he had read Cohon's scathing review of my book in a recent issue of the Jewish Layman. When he introduced me to the audience at the Lyceum he said little that would make them friendly disposed toward me.

I had worked over the lecture while on the train and delivered it with a good deal of clarity and with the appropriate diction though not with the same dramatic verve as when I gave it at Pittsburgh. Yet from a didactic point of view I think it was better than the one at P. Especially the application to the problem raised by the Reformist version of Judaism, I think, should have proved of interest to the audience. But it was just that that irritated many of them. When I got through Cohen said that he did not agree with me and there was a scattered applause at that.

I was naturally annoyed but I kept myself well in hand and got hearty applause to some of my answers to questions sent up in writing.

The lecture had been aranged through the Ford Speaking Bureau which gets 10% of the $100 I am to be paid by the Men's Club. I paid my expenses which amounted to about $18.00.

Some time ago Ira (after consulting me) sent an application to the Seminary for candidacy for the DHL and as the subject of his thesis he suggested "Otherworldliness in the Jewish Ethical Literature." The application was read at the Faculty meeting this afternoon. It was no sooner read than Ginzberg interposed that the subject was vague and Davidson chimed in that he didn't know what otherworldliness meant. It was apparent that both men identified the subject as one which constituted an indirect challenge to their denial of otherworldliness as characteristic of Judaism. I could not help saying that it was part of the very thesis to discuss the term otherworldliness and to define accurately the sense in which it was to be used. But, of course, they had their way and it was decided to ask Ira to specify the meaning of the term.

Not long after that Ginzberg mentioned Minkin's book on Hasidism as worthy of being considered for the award of the DHL. although he disapproved of the first four chapters. As for the other chapters, they showed considerable reading about Hasidism but not of Hasidic literature itself. When Adler asked whether anybody else had read the book I stated my reaction to the first chapter of the book and added privately to Marx who sat alongside me that I was under the impression that a doctor's dissertation had to be based on primary sources. Marx repeated that remark aloud in my name. Ginzberg with his resort to sophistry, whenever occasion requires, replied that to read one Hasidic book is to read all. What a (p.284) he can be! I was very much wrought up by both incidents connected with the doctor's dissertations and was glad to leave the room as soon as the meeting was over.

This afternoon James W. Wise the editor of Opinion called on me to tell me of his decision to resign his editorship. Although the magazine has attained a circulation of over 20,000 it was in danger of going bankrupt within a few months on account of its loss in advertising. That loss was due to the impression that had gone round that he had veered very much to the left. In fact that was true. A change had come over him recently. The argument for Jews joining the communists and against the possibility of getting the Jewish rich to act as Jews rather than as capitalists so ably presented by Rebecca Pitts in her articles in Opinion, represented his own view. That being the case, he felt his association with Opinion would prevent it from getting the advertising it needed to keep it alive. Solicitors for it who up to a year ago were everywhere received in friendly fashion are told that they cannot expect to get subscribers for Opinion because it is communist propaganda. To come out in

favor of the Child Labor Amendment is enough to give people reason to charge you with being a "red."

I told Wise that if he resigns I will withdraw from membership on the editorial board. I explained to him my reason for taking that step. It was the fact that his leanings were communist that interested me in Opinion because that made Opinion representative of the diversity of views possible in Jewish life. If that scope is to be narrowed I have no interest in remaining on the board.

The Jewish Daily Bulletin has had a hard time recently meeting its obligations but, according to what Wise told me, it is being helped through by a certain Mr. Norman. Incidentally he mentioned the fact that Landau, the publisher of the JDB has ready resort to very questionable methods of getting support for his publication. He would go, e.g. to the Polish government and indirectly insinuate that he would not be able to tell the "truth" about its friendly treatment of the Jews unless he were to maintain an office of the Jewish Telegraphic Agency in Warsaw. The government would take the hint and give him a subsidy. I had also heard from other sources about his using the gentle art of blackmail on some of the rich Jews. What truth there is to all this I don't know. But that a community of 4½ million Jews should not have a single respectable organ to gather and spread news is symptomatic of the deline of Jewish spirit.

Wise said that one of the tasks to which he now expected to devote himself was to try to save the Jews of Poland from the utter physical and moral degeneracy to which they are being reduced by the intolerable economic situation there.

* * *

Saturday night, February 23, 1935

This month marked the tenth anniversary of the establishment of the Matz Foundation. Morris Levine had written a very fount (here is an instance of psychological compromise about which I had been reading in E. B. Holt's The Freudian Wish: I was going to say "a fine account" and instead wrote "fount") of the Foundation. He wrote it in Hebrew and had it published in full in the Ha Doar. Meeting me one day at the Seminary he suggested that I arrange for a luncheon some time this month to signalize the anniversary. Much as I disliked the idea I knew that I had to go through with it, so I called up Leo Matz, the secretary of the Board of Trustees and made the necessary preparations for the luncheon at Trotsky's. Present were Matz, Masliansky, John Bernstein, Salzman, Wiernick, Levinthal Levin, Dr. Schwarg, Spiegel, Raisin and myself.

I was very much annoyed at the surroundings which were very noisy and subsconsciously at the whole affair. In consequence I made probably the worst speech in my life. The words just refused to come. In addition I committed a blunder in the one Hebrew phrase I used. Instead of saying (p.285) I said and that in a group of Hebraists. I wouldn't want to go through a similar experinece again for all the world.

* * *

Thursday, February 28, 1935

Last Tuesday I spoke before a group of people whom B. Leon Hurwitz has managed to organize into a study group at his temple on 9th St., Brooklyn. He is a cross between a go-getting salesman and a shamash of a Hasidic rebi. In order to get members for his temple which has practically been abandoned by the original group of German Jews who have moved away into different neighborhoods, he has taken up good-will work. That brings him in contact with people.

When he finds that they are not affiliated with a congregation he tries to get them as members for his temple.

I spoke on "Reconstruction of American Jewish Life." Although the weather was beastly - hailing, raining and snowing - there were over 50 present, just the number Hurwitz had assured me would be there. Among them were Judge May, a certain Dr. Cohen, the president of the Jewish Teachers Association (of the N.Y. Public Schools), the president of Hadassah and other men and women of more than average standing in the community. I was very much annoyed by their eagerness to lecture to me after I was through with my talk, rather than to have me answer questions. In spite of the fact that I made it clear to them that I was interested in their grasping the problem of Jewish life in all its seriousness rather than in offering them a concrete plan, they kept on attacking my plan for reconstructing Jewish life. One criticism, however, I did take to heart and that was that alongside the vision that Herzl could hold out to the Jews, when he urged them to build up Palestine, the prospect I hold out of living in two civilizations is very tame and prosaic. The critic didn't use these words, but he meant them and I felt them.

I am occupied these days during my free moments with the problem of what to do during the next summer and how to spend the year of sabbatical leave in case I decide to ask for it. One moment I am all for Palestine, for going there with the view of settling there permanently. The next moment, at the thought of the wrench such a change would mean to my mode of life and the possibility of doing something constructively Jewish in this country, I give up the idea of going to Palestine altogether. Why not use all the time I have to write and agitate for the revival of Jewish life?

In the midst of this vacillation I am called in by Mr. and Mrs. Salzman to advise them what to do. Salzman is anxious to give up a flourishing business and to settle permanently in Palestine. By associating himself with Palestine Economic Development group, he would be in a position to help build up the land by means of the practical help he could extend to those who are planning to set up in business. His wife, on the other hand, fearing that by taking this step he would have to discontinue supporting a number of relatives on his and on her side, and diminish the security which their children enjoy is opposed to his plan. After hearing both sides of the case I gave my opinion as being in accord with Mrs. Salzman. I was probably voicing my own desire to have a person of his means and his interest in things Jewish remain in this country where I could count upon his help in my efforts on behalf of American Jewry.

* ** *

Friday, March 1, 1935

If I knew that I could use the sabbatical year to let myself be myself instead of having to be the censor at large, I would not hesitate to ask for it. But I am afraid that with my own personality too dull and monotonous to hold my interest, and with that congenital shyness which prevents me from making contacts, there is nothing left for me to do but to try to change the world. If I am endowed to be the Censor, whether footloose or tied to routine, I might as well spend the rest of my days right here.

* * *

Sunday, March 3, 1935

Last night the Jewish Community Group met at my house. Besides me the following were present: Dr. A. Coralnik, Harry Glucksman, Dr. Poole, Dr. M. Karpf, Benderly couldn't come because he had to preside at a parents' dinner of his Camp Achva. The following notified they couldn't come: Lowenstein, Kohs, Goldenson, [illegible]

Though or because there were only five of us present, the discussion was most fruitful of any our group has had. Glucksman presented a report of his efforts to organize the 20,000 Jews of Jersey city into a community. The following are some of the facts he brought out:

The Jews are engaged in retail business, white collar services, real estate and law and medicine.

The political set up of the town is noted for its corruption. Industries are established as a result of concessions and privileges in taxes and assessments extended to their owners by the mayor and his henchmen. The low political standards is responsible for Jews taking advantage of it to promote their own interests. Real estate people and their lawyers, owners of movie picture theatres, etc. have to be in with the politicians to be able to do business. In consequence the moral and spiritual standard of the Jewish community is very low. Organizations of all kinds, synagogue groups, religious schools, charitble and loan societies are formed by people who want to impress the politicians with the fact that they have a following.

Glucksman described the process by which he expects the Jews of Jersey City to accept the community idea. According to him, it was only the financial difficulties in which the various organizations there happen to find themselves that compels them to lend an ear to his suggestion that they get together. But it will be a long time before they are ready for the appreciation of the inherent value of community as such. He has to proceed very cautiously not to spring the community idea too soon.

The more he dwelt on the slowness of the process the more evident it became that we cannot rely on this plodding method to advance the movement for Jewish community. The community idea must be presented to the large masses of unorganized Jews in the large Jewish centers. To carry out that task two things are necessary. 1. For

those who are to have an active part in promulgating the idea, rabbis, educators and social workers, a very definite conception of what we are to aim at, or a very specific notion of what we mean by a "United Jewish Community," must be formulated. 2. The Next step will be how to popularize and dramatize the idea so as to create a popular demand for its realization.

Glucksman referring to the fact that men of the Warburg, Baerwald type have been the ones who have had the main determining influence on Jewish life, said "We still live in the chieftain age."

What a divisive agency religion is in Jewish life was brought home to me by the following which Poole told us:

The Synagogue Council was created for the purpose of having some authoritative body that might speak in the name of all the religious groups among the Jews in this country. It consists of appointed representatives of the three rabbinical and the three lay organizations known as Orthodox, Conservative and Reform, respectively. Every ruly or resolution adopted by the Council must be passed unanimously before it is presented for approval by each of the constituent organizations.

As a member of that Council, Poole formulated a plan according to which every community would have its local Synagogue Council for the purpose of dealing with such religious and educational problems as they had in common. The plan was passed by the Council, but was thrown out by each of the three lay organizations. The Orthodox (Union of Orthodox Congr.) objected to it on the ground that they wouldn't even consider having Reform Jews advising them on matters of religious education. The Conservative (United Synagogue) objected because there are communities where there is no Conservative congregation. This plan would make it impossible for a Conservative congregation to arise. The Reform (Union of Hebrew.Congr.) objected because it would

mean forfeiting their superiority and being reduced to a status of parity with the other congregations. (This, of course, was not stated expressly but was clearly implied, according to Poole's own testimony.)

In the paper which I may have to prepare for the convention in June on the Sociological Aspect of the Community the following points should be stressed: 1) The need of a constructive rather than a monetary approach to community organization; 2) Jewish organization must be taken out of the hands of minimalist Jews; 3) The National Council of Federation represents the minimalist point of view and is unqualified to pass [redacted] on problems of Jewish organization.

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Monday, March 4, 1935

As I sat at the meeting of the SAJ Board tonight I wished I could take the first boat to Palestine.

* * *

Friday, March 8, 1935

Some time in October after the dedication exercises of the new Seminary gate was over, Solis Cohen Jr., one of the trustees of the Seminary asked me to come to Philadelphia to address a group of people at the YMHA who are troubled by the problem of Judaism. I did not want to accept his invitation, but I could not very well refuse it because I could not give a satisfactory excuse. The date was to be March 7 and that seemed a long way off. But now that I am through I am not sorry I went.

The gathering which I addressed last night was sponsored by three organizations: the "Y," the Jewish Publication Society and the Philadelphia Branch of the Seminary. Some of my former students who occupy pulpits in Phila. were in the audience -- Klein, Neumann, Matt, Nathan, Englander, Katzoff, Lipis and Barnet. The subject had been

announced as Judaism--Old and New. That gave me a good clue for introducing my plan for the reconstruction of Jewish life. I think that what I said made an impression.

Before the address I had dinner with Henry W. Braude, a lawyer who is the chairman of the Seminary branch at Phila. Dr. A. A. Neumann with whom I had ~~a~~ long lost contact and whom I had come to regard with some antipathy because of his being a kind of flunky to Cyrus Adler, was also a guest at the dinner. I am glad that we met in that way, because we are bound to be more friendly to each other henceforward. He drove me in his car to the Y and we spoke to each as in those days when I looked to him to approach the problem of Judaism in the same way as I did.

From the conversation at the dinner table and subsequent remarks I gather that quite a number of people have read and many more are discussing my book. An interesting reference was the one to a man whose attitude toward things Jewish had generally been known to be negative. There was nothing he didn't find fault with. This same man read my book and sings its praises to all and sundry.

Another of the guests whose name I can't recall, took me in his car from the Y to the Penn. Station. In the course of the conversation he said "I understand that the Seminary graduates who are rabbis in Philadelphia were students of yours. Why is it, then, that I never hear from any of them such ideas as I heard you express tonight?" I could not help telling him that Adler's presence in Phila. had much to do with their attitude toward my ideas.

* * *

Saturday night, March 9, 1935

Meyer W. Weisgal called yesterday. He was the editor of the New Palestine during the early twenties when the ZOA spent money like a drunken sailor. He got out those fancy issues of the New Palestine which

small fortunes. His latest achievement was the "Romance of a People," which was the most spectacular dramatic pagaent Jews have ever produced. One of the performances - I believe the first - which was given at Chicago drew a crowd of over 130,000 people. Weisgal is the kind of reckless enterpreneuer we need to prod the lethargic masses of our people into artistic self-expression as Jews.

Just now he is engaged in a new and even more daring venture. He managed to get Reinhardt interested in the project of directing a play on a Jewish theme. Reinhardt got Werfel to write such a play and Lewisohn is translating it. The problem now is how is the play to be financed? Weisggl tried to interest Edward Warburg, but Warburg after reading the play refused to have anything to do with it because, in his opinion, it puts the Jews on a pinnacle and is chauvinistic in spirit. With a letter from Cyrus Adler, Weisgal went to see William Rosenwald and met with even a worse rebuff. Sarnoff of the Radio Company, when asked to place the theatre of Radio City at the disposal of the play, replied that he would welcome Reinhardt's direction of the play, provided he would first direct three other plays of general interest.

The only alternative now is to turn to the middle class Jews who have a stake in Jewish life. The plan is to have three men sign a letter to about fifty or sixty such Jews for the purpose of putting the problem before them. This decision was arrived at by a few who had met the night before with Weisgal; Lipsky and Samuels were among them. He came to ask me to be one of the signers of the letter inviting a number of people to a meeting next Thursday. I gave him my consent.

* * *

Sunday, March 10, 1935

Now that James W. Wise has resigned the editorshio of Opinion the question is who will take his place? The editorial Board, which hasn't met for over a year, was called together last Friday at a luncheon

to answer that question. Present were Mrs. Kohut (whose guests at the American Women's Club, 353 West 57 St. we all were) Dr. Wise, Maurice Samuel, John H. Holmes, Irwin Edman, Marks (the publisher) and I. Lewisohn was the only one absent. Wise, in the course of the meeting dropped the remark that Jim couldn't possibly be on the same board with Lewisohn. He referred, undoubtedly, to Lewisohn's reactionsim as expressed in his recent book "Horizons."

These meetings always annoy me. Everybody present is usually in a hurry and talks so fast that he can't possibly be thinking any too intensely on the subject of discussion. Even the little consistent thinking that is occasionally precipitated is immediately dispersed by some wisecrack and I for one feel shell shocked, if not figuratively dispersed. All that emerged from the rapid talk at that luncheon was that Stephen Wise will be a sort of acting editor for a few months. This is the method of the Jewish quasi-dictators; they begin as acting presidents, acting this and acting that until they are full presidents, editors, etc. When I interpolated that it would be a mistake to have a rabbi be the editor of Opinion because that would stamp it as a distinctively religious magazine, he brushed aside the objection by saying: "You don't imply that mine is a sectarion religionism." Holmes correctly said to me after the meeting "He missed your point entirely." But how was I going to get into an argument with him, when I saw that everybody was sitting on pins and needles. Within a couple ofhours after my Naomi saw Wise come out from some apartment house carfying his rabbinical gown on one arm and an Easter lillies in his other arm. He had apparently officiated at some wedding right after the luncheon meeting.

This afternoon I am scheduled to speak before the social problems club of the Teachers Institute students. The topic assigned to me is one on which I have not so far ventured to express myself with any definiteness. I am expected to answer specifically the question: What should be the attitude of the Jews toward the current radical movements? As on previous occasions I shall try to organize my ideas under the impulse of having to put them down on paper.

Jews find themselves in the unfortunate position of being not only the victims of the present economic order, but both the most victimized victims and the scapegoats for the sins of those who benefit by that order. It is therefore natural for Jews to be prominent in any radical movement which aims to change the status quo.

Shall the Jews join the communist movement? It holds out the promise not only of making them the beneficiaries of the better world order but very definitely of eliminating anti-Semitism. To explain the answer which I at present prepared to give, andwhich I may have to change later because of new circumstances which I do not as yet foresee, I must state that I am speaking as one who is interested first and foremost in the survival of Judaism as a contributing factor in the world toward making it what it ought to be. Because of my keen desire to see it survive I cannot conscientiously advise against joining the communist movement on the ground of anything that Judaism teaches, because I would thereby only add communism to the enemies and destructive forces that are already arrayed against it. If on the other hand I were to advise Jews to join communism, I would be augmenting the danger which goes with being made the scapegoat for the sins of the present social order.

The only way out of this predicament is for Jews to avoid regarding their Jewishness as being either a hindrance or an incentive to their joining the proletariat in the class struggle. They should

refrain from taking sides in a collective capacity. They should approach the problem as individuals, and as human beings who find the present social regime unbearable.

It is in that capacity that I, for one, weigh the alternatives of communism and socialism and decide that I want to throw in my lot with the latter, although there is a possibility that the forces of reaction might become so menacing as to leave no other choice but communism. For the present my objections to communism are first, its insistence upon becoming not only an economic system, but a new philosophy of life to be based on dogmatic materialism. Secondly, its tactics of declaring civil war instead of resorting to civil war as a last measure. Thirdly, its strategy of class war. Such strategy is totally unsuited in a country like ours which has so large a middle class, which contrary to Marx's prediction is not being forced into a fighting proletarianism but either into white collar respectability or into resigned mendicalism. The chances of success in a civil war are so balanced that the greater part of the population would be wiped out before any decisive victory would be won and there is no telling whose the victory would be.

The foregoing talk came off quite well from an oratorical point of view, but not so well from the point of view of the questioning which followed it. I found it rather difficult to account for the inability of the Socialists to make headway anywhere. There can be no doubt that the communists have stolen a march on them and are in possession of the field.

My next task is to formulate a statement that would help us envisage a United Jewish Community. I have to prepare such a statement for the meeting of the Jewish Community Group scheduled for next Saturday night.

* * *

Friday, March 15, 1935

Some time ago Chipkin asked me to invite a few people at my home to meet Associate Superintendent Jacob Greenberg and Commissioner of Education, Louis Posner. In his efforts to have Hebrew introduced into the High Schools he encounters a good deal of opposition from the Jews in the system, and when he finally succeeds in getting the educational authorities to yield he discovers that the Yeshiva crowd headed by Revel tries to horn in on the situation in order to exploit it for their own glory. He therefore expressed to me his desire that the educational authorities should become acquainted with some of us who are engaged in Jewish educational work and should learn to turn to us for advice and cooperation instead of the Yeshiva crowd. I acted on his suggestion and called for he informal conference which took place at my house last Wednesday. I had invited Scharfstein, Benderly, Dinin, Profs. Baron, Spiegel and Finkelstein and Ira. Finkelstein had promised to come but didn't show up. Baron didn't even acknowledge the invitation and Spiegelwrote he had an engagement to speak.

The two facts which emerged from the discussion were: 1) that if not for Chipkin there would have been no Hebrew courses in any of the high schools; 2) that his success has been due to his persistent lobbying. Whether the movement for Hebrew is to make headway still depends upon personal whims and political wire pulling. Because Posner had nominated a certain Dr. Roberts for the superintendency of the high schools, he can hint to Dr. Roberts that he should not obstruct Chipkins' efforts.

The extent to which personal influence plays a part in determining Jewish communal activities was brought out in the conversation I had with Glucksman and Weisgal who came to see me yesterday afternoon in reference to the gathering to be held next Monday. About

two years ago when Goldsmith assumed charge of the Federation work at Chicago, he began to make trouble for Dushkin. Learning that Judge Proskauer had been scheduled to address a meeting of Federation at Chicago, Dushkin, when he came to N.Y., asked Glucksman to suggest in some way to Proskauer that he boost the importance of Jewish education. Glucksman managed to meet Proskauer and in an offhand way intimated to P. that he should in addressing the Chicago Federation stress the value of Jewish children being taught Bible and Jewish history (terms~~sk~~ in which Jewish education is acceptable to P.) Sure enough when P spoke in Chicago he made so warm hearted a plea for Jewisheducation that Dushkin had easy sailing for a long time thereafter.

Incidentally, Glucksman mentioned a clever remark of Jonah Goldstein's which bears on the same point. In the course of the campaign G. conducted a few years ago for JDC and Palestine Funds, he had occasion to note the quick response of the Center members to Judge Rosalsky's invitation. When Jonah heard him remark upon that fact, he said "No wonder these people do what he wants. They want to make sure that they would be able to rely on his friendship in case any of their sons get into trouble and stand before him the in the court of General Sessions."

Last night was supposed to be seminar night. Only four were present. Those who were supposed to report did not come. I spent the time in pointing out to them he indispensability of communal organization and the extent to which the congregation is an obstructive vested interest that is jeopardizing the future of Judaism in this country. I urged them to look for other than the routine outlets for their functioning and suggested to them that they get in touch with Glucksman who might advise them whether they should train themselves to direct communal centers.

Hyman who is very serious minded and intellectually honest, voiced the discontent of the majority of the students with the courses on education instituted last year at the Seminary and given by Simon Greenberg of Philadelphia. Simon Greenberg is temperamentally opposed to my entire philosophy of Judaism and in sympathy with Finkelstein's simiosities in thought and conduct. Finkelstein seeing in him a kindred soul, has been grooming him for the Seminary faculty and got Adler to appoint him for he course in education in spite of the fact that Chipkin was the only logical man for the position. The students apparently see through F's schemes, which they deeply resent. But what they cannot endure is G's arrogant fashion of lecturing them for daring to hold views that differ from his.

* * *

Sunday, March 17, 1935

The inroads made into Jewish life by the long summer vacation have within the last decade been supplemented by the newly acquired habit of the more comfortably situated among our people to go to Florida or California during the winter season, and by the still more recent tendency to take a trip to Palestine during the spring season. Judaism in this country is thus coming to be an autumnal style of living.

Last night the "Community Group" met at M.J. Karpf's home. This was in deference to Pool's objection the time before last to having the group meet all the time in my house, because, as he put it, "the whole thing might appear like a Kaplan affair." I conceded he was right, and so we came to meet in Karpf's home. Since Milton Steinberg had apparently dropped out, I felt I could invite Ira to join us and I proposed his name to those who were present at the previous meeting. Accordingly, the following attended the meeting last

night: Salo Baron, Benderly, Eisenstein, Glucksman, Karpf, Poole, Shalom Spiegel and myself.

I presented a statement envisaging an organic Jewish community both in its ultimate and its immediate form. My main point was that instead of the fiscal approach we should develop the psychological approach which I defined as being based on the need of generating in the individual Jew a desire for status in Jewry as a permanent historic group functioning actively as a whole in all of its parts.

The discussion which followed was quite constructive.

* * *

Monday, March 18, 1935

I have to speak the coming Wednesday at Plainfield, N.J. on Maimonides. The celebration of M's octocentenary is a welcome relief from the usual round of Jewish activities which are confined to anti-Semitism and fund-raising. For once the Jews engage in something inherently interesting anc cultural and for these days when Jews should be wrestling with the problem of self-adjustment there could be no more significant focus of attention than the personality and influence of Maimonides. We cannot learn from what he taught how to meet our own problems today but we can learn a good deal about Judaism and the spiritual possibilities that inhere in it if we realize what it means for his teachings to have found a place in it. It is true that Maimonides effected a reconciliation between Jewish tradition and Aristotelian philosophy. But in the process of reconciling he so changed the entire perspective of Jewis h tradition that it lost its original character and became something different. If the intention of an act determines its character, certainly the intention of an entire system of life and thought gives character to that system. What M. did was to ascribe to the social heritage of the Jews an intention derived from Greek civilization. He imposed upon Judaism a pattern of meanings previously

unkown to it and foreign to its spirit until his day. How is it that Judaism was capable of assimilating his teachings and accepting him as the foremost teacher since the Judah ha-nasi? The answer is that Judaism not being an interpretation of life, but a segment of life, not being a religion but a civilization, must admit of various interpretations. If, however, Judaism is to be prevented from disintegrating as a result of diversity of interpretation, its constituent elements and its sancta must function as objects of vital interest. The reason M. was able to change the perspective of Judaism without being excommunicated was that he participated in Jewish life and devoted himself to rendering its sancta capable of being observed. If he had not been the great Talmudist he was and had not written his Yad ha-Nazakah, his interpretation of Judaism would have been repudiated not merely by a zealous minority but by the entire Jewish people. To appreciate the force of the principle here posited viz: that Judaism permits great latitude of interpretation provided the interpretation is accompanied by an active interest in the activities and sancta of Judaism, it is necessary to know the pattern of the entire Maimonidean thought structure.

* * *

Saturday night, March 23, 1935

Last week was a rather strenuous one for me. Monday night after I got through with the Megillah services at the SAJ I bolted down my supper to be in time for the conference to consider the production of Franz Werfel's play "The Road to Promise." The conference had been arranged by Weisgal in accordance with the conversation he had had with me two weeks ago. The letter calling the conference, which took place at Hotel Ambassador, was signed by Louis Lipsky, George Z. Medalie and me. There were present between twenty and twenty-five people. Medolie presided and introduced the subject by pointing out the importance of having the Gentiles learn about us and our ideals. That purpose could

best be achieved by a spectacular production like the one which W. had arranged for with Reinhardt, Werfel and Kurt Weill (who has written the music). It was the old story over again; the interest is so important an undertaking, not so much for its intrinsic artistic value, or for its significance in enhancing and enriching the Jewish consciousness, but for the effect that it might have on the Gentiles. I don't know whether to regard this attitude as morbid vanity or self-contempt, but whatever it is it is unmistakable evidence of the complete vacuousness of the Jewish element in the lives of such people. As I was sitting in the taxi with Medalie and his wife, the latter referred to the fact that her daughter - precocious child - had suggested that such a dramatic production would do more harm than good because it presented the Jews as boasting of their greatness. The lady impresses me as one of those social and intellectual climbers who feel apologetic about their Judaism. I noticed that she made notes of the objections she was going to raise at the meeting, and that those notes were written out in Greek letters. Thus the 7th point that she had intended to make was BWXTTIVY.

After Medalie got through he called upon Lipsky to explain the nature of the play, but the latter asked that I speak first. I gave my interpretation of the value of the production as consisting in what it would do for the Jews themselves, and pointed out that by adding to the fund of esthetic Jewish values the production furnished a basis of psychological unity for Jewish life. I spoke fluently and clearly.

All day Tuesday I worked on the talk on Maimonides and succeeded in writing out by Wednesday noon an outline of his biography and full notes on his philosophy. I call the article into which those notes are to be developed for the next number of the Reconstructionist "How Maimonides Reconstructed Judaism."

Wednesday afternoon I officiated at the wedding of William Salzman's daughter. With Rabbi Israel Levinthal and H. Masliansky as guests I knew that I had to be in ship-shape form and with a little extra effort I succeeded, and that in spite of the gossip Ira had communicated to me in reference to the bridggroom Mr. Pepper. Both parties to the marriage were divorces.

Right after the ceremony I rushed to make a train to Plainfield, N.J. (where I had spoken in Jan. 1933). By mistake I came an hour too early but that gave me a chance to become acquainted with the inner life of the Jewish community there. Allen, the executive director of the Jewish Community Center where I had been scheduled to speak, met me at the station. While driving in his car he told me enough facts about the Jewish activities there to enable me to realize that the condition of Jewish life there was far from hopeful. What had been a Reformist congregation (Temple Sholom) changed into a conservative one headed by Rabbi Bertrand Pollans of the JIR. When he came to Plainfield about two years ago the congregation almost trebled its membership. But of late there has been a considerable falling off in membership due according to Allen, to Pollan's insistence upon airing his radical and socialistic views in the pulpit. It doesn't look as though Rabbi Pollans will last long there.

At the community center itself things don't look so bright either. With a mortgage of about $80,000 on the interest of which the Center is always in arrears these days, it is very difficult to get sufficient funds for the activities. It is now more than five years since the center has been in existence and its members will celebrate these days a belated fifth anniversary. Allen who has been with the institution since its inception manages to get his salary paid, but he doesn't strike me as the kind of man that is capable of giving to the Communal Center the kind of direction it needs, if it is to be a

constructive force in American Jewish life.

What Rabbi Hollans whom I met at the building had to tell me about himself and his experiences interested me very much. As a lad he had attended the Isaac Elhanan Yeshibah until he was sixteen. After he was graduated from college he studied at the JIR. In 1931-32 he started a kind of experimental synagogue in this city. What he experimented with was the ritual. He attempted to create a new ritual out of the mass of Hebrew poetic material which is far more expressive of actual spiritual experience than the conventional liturgy. He wasn't able to get very far, because he did not get any support. In order to make a living he had to accept the pulpit in Plainfield although he had been strongly warned against it. All the rest follows naturally.

I renewed my acquaintance with Henry Rosenbaum and an old little man by the name of Schiff. It was 9:00 before there was enough of an audience for me to talk to. A young girl read a few passages -- ill chosen -- from Maimonides' will to his son, and a group of young people identified with Hashomer Hazair sang horribly off key a few Palestinian songs. It took me almost an hour to cover the notes I had on M's biography and I saw that it would be absurd for me to attempt the discussion of M's philosophy. I believe the people were satisfied with what I told them. They wanted to ask questions, but the chairman seeing that I didn't want to miss the train for N.Y. did not encourage any discussion. For this I was grateful to him, because I was quite tired by that time. At this season of the year I find walking and standing very tiring.

As I was waiting for the train a certain Mrs. Giddings who had been at the lecture came to meet her husband. She expressed her regret that there had been no discussion. She wanted to ask me how to account for the fact that the young people in the center clubs whom she had been trying hard to interest in Jewish things simply will

not have them. As a parting shot before leaving Plainfield this question of hers was indeed calculated to put me into a "jolly" frame of mind.

This afternoon a German Jew by the name of Hirsch called. He left Germany about two years ago and established himself in Palestine. He is in this country on business and intends to sail for Palestine in a few weeks. I gathered from him a few interesting facts about the German Jews who had migrated to Palestine the last two years. Of the twenty-odd thousand who have come there about 5000 are in the colonies identified for the most part with the Haluz movement. About the same number represent the assimilated element who have come to Palestine much against their will and who would like to reproduce there the kind of life they had led in Germany. The chief problem presented by the German element is how to get them to learn Hebrew. They wanted to have a German newspaper and a special group with the Bnai Brith, but the Hebraic forces led by Ussishkin have put up a strong resistance. The fact that while nothing but Hebrew is allowed on public occasions, other languages are in use in the homes, makes it very hard for these newcomers to acquire the language.

The conversation turned upon the religious aspect of the life there. Hirsch remarked that the synagogues have absolutely no influence in shaping the mind of the Jews there. Rabbi Kook's influence in that direction is also nil. I voiced the yearning to settle in Palestine in order to bring to bear upon the situation such ideas as I was in the habit of articulating. He was very much in sympathy with such a move on my part and even suggested that some of the Seminary graduates be encouraged to settle in Palestine for the purpose of supplying the missing religious note in its life. He has evidently been thinking about this problem, because he mentioned an idea that had cherished,

namely, the need of organizing a kind of Jewish religious order or brotherhood.

The accompanying correspondence between Judge Lehman and myself is the outcome of a remark I happened to make to Glucksman when I saw him at the conference last Monday. He spoke to me about the meeting on April 7 at the local Y at which he wanted me to discuss the problem of community and then stated that I would get an invitation from Judge Lehman, which he hoped I would accept. At the mere mention of Lehman's name I flared up and gave vent to all the resentment I had harbored against him for not having acknowledged the receipt of my book and of the inscribed copy of the High Holiday prayers I had sent him in September. What he had done to prevent my getting the Rosenwald prize naturally rankled all the time. All that came out in the burst of anger with which I greeted Glucksman's mention of Lehman's name. If I had known he would go and blabber about it to Lehman I would certainly have exercised some self-restraint. But since I failed to restrain my resentment then I did so in my reply now. I was going to say a lot of bitter things about the coldness of the "leading trustees" of the Seminary to my efforts within and outside the Seminary, but I held back and penned a gentle reply on which I spent a good deal of time.

Yesterday afternoon I had to play a reverse role. I had received an angry letter in Hebrew from Dr. Tchernowitz. He wanted to know whether I was responsible for the letter he had received from Ira saying that the Reconstructionist could not publish any review of his recent book on the development of the Halakah because very few of the subscribers to the R are familiar with Hebrew. The real reason for my asking Ira to write him that letter was that I could not see my way clear to giving a favorable review of the book, which seemed to me very super-

ficial and of little scientific value. In order not to offend him by publishing an unfavorable review I thought the best thing would be to avoid reviewing it altogether. Ira's letter stung him to the quick and I had some job formulating a Hebrew letter that would pacify him. Since I very seldom write Hebrew I had to spend several hours reading the (p.299) to get myself into the proper mood. And then came the task of finding the proper formula that would be diplomatic without being untruthful. I think I managed in the end.

The two papers I read at Chicago a year ago last summer under the auspices of the Haskell Foundation Institute appeared in a volume edited by A. Eustace Haydon called "Modern Trends in World Religions." The book was reviewed about a month ago in the N.Y. Times Book Review.

As I am concluding this the seventh volume of the Journal I am wondering whether I ought to start an eighth volume, and if I do whether I ought to write it in English or in Hebrew. My reason for questioning the value of this Journal is that its scope is so limited and the story so monotonous, to say nothing of my inability to write in such a way as to enliven the account of the persons and incidents I refer to. The only possible value of this Journal is that it helps me locate in time some things I did in the past, which I would otherwise forget completely. If I hadn't entered the item concerning my visit to Plainfield in Jan. 1933 I wouldn't have known whether I was there a year ago or five years ago. I wonder what this inability to locate in time past actions or events is a sign of.

This lack of enthusiasm about beginning a new volume of the Journal is but a phase of the discouragement I experience about life in general and American Jewish life in particular. Although personally I have no reason to complain, the misery of the millions who are un-

employed, the uncertainty of the future to which the youth look forward and above all the impending clouds of war that threatens to destroy whole populations, take all the zest out of living. The fact that my own middle-years are soon to end and that I am beginning to feel the aches and pains hat augur old age wouldn't worry me in the least if there were some sign that the insanity which has seized the nations is beginning to subside and the slightest indications anywhere evident that humanity will finally come to its senses and not commit hari-kari. And as for American Jewish life, I have come to a point where I feel as though I were choking for lack of air to breathe. It is almost a physical sensation with me and never so painful as on Sabbath mornings at the services of the SAJ when I sit on the platform and watch the few old timers going through mechanical ly the services. The Torah is taken out, the Shamash Mentscher reads in his monotonous drone those outlandish portions about the Tabernacle and all kinds of lepers, the scroll is put back, a few people straggle in. I count the number present - hardly fifty people. It is soon Musaph; a few young people slink in. By twelve o'clock they still keep on coming. The maximum is attained - 125. Either Ira delivers the sermon or I do. There is no progression of ideas. We always have to begin from the beginning. After all these years Ira had to try to answer in today's sermon the question "What is Religion?" Failing to get an adequate answer the audience was left in complete confusion as though neither Ira nor I had ever said a word about religion all these years. The services are over. A few people come up and say Gut Shabbos. A whole week passes - a void. The next Sabbath or festival comes. It finds everybody just where they were a week ago, a year ago, a decade ago, minus all the strength and

hope of improvement that have kept on oozing out ever since I have veen engaged in Jewish work.

(from fly leaf at end of Journal)

Record of work in Seminary, p. 148

c= criticism of "Judaism as a Civilization" see p. 210

"That's what's wrong with us!...We can't talk...everybody goes around stuffed up with things they want to say and can't." (Rebecca West in "The Harsh Voice) xopied from Sat. Rev. of Lit. March 11/35.

(Hebrew)

Journal Volume VIII, April 2, 1935-June 9, 1939
Flyleaf and inside front cover

(Hebrew article)

"The encyclopedists of the eighteenth century played their part in breaking the tyranny of their time without engaging in politi cal struggles" From review in N.Y. Times Book Review, Aug. 7/38 -- copied Aug. 22/38

"Adjustment is maintained by purposive behavior. Fortunately we may benhappy without being completely 'adjusted,' without being in the condition of having satisfied all of our needs. The essentially dynamic character of our physiological processes permits us to find joy in working toward adjustment, in the revaluation of experience and the reformulation of attitudes and value concepts. It is only frustration beyond a bearable point and loss of hope to the point of desolation which disorganizes and destroys. The incompleteness of social experience and the inadequacies of our human understanding of values are really challenges which offer the opportunity for significant behavior and significant evaluation of experience in the future. Our ego needs can be met best by entering this stream of human experience and endeavoring to progress it."

D. A. Prescott, Emotion and the Educative Process, p.192

(cop. Oct. 6/38)

As lucid and inspiring a statement as I have ever come across.

"Most men live lives of quiet desperation" Thoreau

"Such detachment came at times to a man exhausted by prolonged physical effort and isolation. His body plodded on mechanically, while his reasonable mind left him, and from without looked down critically on him, wondering what that futile lumber did and why. Sometimes these selves would converse in the void; and their madness was very near, as I believe it would be near the man who could see things through the veils at once of two customs, two educations, two

environments." T. S. Lawrence, Seven Pillars, p. 32. Copied Sat. night, Oct. 26, 1935

"...many of my arrows left my bow only to seek my own breast.
And the flier was also the creeper;
For when my wings were spread in the sun their shadow upon the earth was a turtle.
And I the believer was also the doubter;
For often have I put my finger in my own wound that I might have the greater belief in you and the greater knowledge of you."

The Prophet, Kalil Gibran. Copied Sat. night, Jan. 4, 1936

(Hebrew - copied Thurs. night, June 18, 1936)

"As a person" (John Middleton Murry) "I was quite extraordinaril underdeveloped and chaotic. Every man seen from within looks to himself indefinite. A cloud from within looks like a fog. A lake, if you are inside it, is just water. Clearly enough Murry was sensitive and found life a painful experience." (Arthur Colton in Sat. Review, July 18, 1936) Copied Wed. July 22, 1936

(Hebrew) Quoted in Ha-Arez, Aug. 21,1936. Copied Sept. 10, 1936

"In one of Bernard Shaw's plays "Too True to Be Good" at the end of the first act a player declares "The play is now practically over, but the characters will continue to discuss it for two more acts."

Jerome Davis, Capitalism and Its Culture, p. 519

"The Older, the bolder" Frank W. Nemison

(Hebrew)

"Der mensch ist aus zu krummen Holz gemacht, als deso je etwas ganz Gerades aus ihm gezimmert werden Kronnte.

Feb. 24, 1938 Max Scheler Philosophische Weltanschauenz Kant

"To make your pupil virtuous you must not preach to him but lead him to practice." James Ward, Psych. Applies to Education, p.11

"The poet Ginsti has said: 'Writing a book is worse than useless, unless it is going to change people'" Giovanni Gentile: The Reform of Education 188.

(Hebrew)

"I cannot help suspecting that our schools and universities must largely share the blame with those ancient perverters of the truth (prejudice and self-interest). And if they are to blame it is because they make learning the first thing and thinking the second place the tradition of knowledge before the training of the mind." James Ward, Psychology Applied to Education, 87, June 20, 1938

"God offers to every mind its choice between repose and truth. Take which you please. You can never have both."

Emerson June 25, 1938.

Tuesday, April 2, 1935

For a long time I was debating with myself whether to continue writing this journal in English or to attempt to write it in Hebrew. But when I thought of the very first matter I would have to record in it there seemed to be someting incongruous in trying to record it in Hebrew. I am therefore postponing the fulfillment of my ambition to make a practice of writing in Hebrew until I come to Palestine, where Hebrew will enter into the very fibre of what I shall have occasion to comment upon.

The matter I refer to is the tempest in the teapoint, let loose by M. J. Karpf, the director of the Graduate School for Jewish Social Workers. Last Wendesday night he came to see me to tell me of the communist mimeographed sheet called "The Radical Therapist" issued by a group of students in the School, and of his resolve to send in his resignation to the Board of Trustees. He assumes that the rest of the faculty would do likewise because of the scurrilous attack on them and the Trustees. Being at heart only too glad to find an excuse for discontinuing the course I am giving at the Graduate School because I find it futile to try to overcome the negative attitude toward things Jewish on the part of the majority of the students, I readily assented to his decision.

On Thursday, however, a change took place. The Faculty met at Prof. Salo Baron's home from 11 to 2 (I got there at 12:00) and decided to proceed slowly and to put it up to the students to find some way of dealing with those responsible for "The Radical Therapist." When the discussion veered to the fundamental problem of reconciling social work with the radical trends in present day society, it became evident that the only way to do it was by giving a more intensively and affirmatively Jewish direction to the work at the school. I even went so far as to suggest that every student be expected to engage in some specificially Jewish project, like leading a Young Judea Club or

other work of a similar character, in order to become more deeply interested in the possibilities of Jewish life.

Last Monday Karpf met the students and stated the grievance which the Faculty had against them and left it to them to make answer. The only outcome of the meeting with the students which took place subsequently was a repudiation of the attitude expressed in the Radical Therapist. The Faculty met again later, this time to draw up some general principles to regulate for the future students activities and publications.

I thought of Young Judea in connection with the above because of what Mrs. Vixman, the director of Young Judea work had told me on Wednesday when she came to ask my advice about it. I was pleasantly surprised to learn from her that Governor Lehman had given $1000 a year to Young Judea and that in former years he used to give even more. The reduction in his contribution is due to the many demands made upon him these days.

* * *

Wednesday, April 3, 1935

Last Saturday the subject of my address was "How Maimonides Reconstructed Judaism." In spite of the notices that had been sent out announcing special services in honor of the octocentennary there were only about 200 people present. Of these, twelve were gentiles who chanced upon our sercices as part of some sightseeing tour, I imagine.

I received yesterday the following telegram from Cleveland where I am scheduled to speak Friday night:

"Zionists desire to have you as guest to luncheon. Fine Zionist institution. Informal talk or answer to questions or even

silence. Optional. Please wire acceptance. Barnett R. Brickner, A. H. Friedland."

In reply I sent the following reply:

"Am always glad to meet people ffom whom I can learn, but can not expect people to take off time in the middle of the day to teach me. Have not kept in sufficiently close touch with Zionist situation to be in a position to advise those who have. My specialty is the problem of American Jewish life which seems to bore most Zionists."

The following is the answer I received:

"Cleveland Zionists anxious to have you either talk or answer a few questions on the American Jewish problem. In fact discussed last week at luncheon the possibility of a Kehilla. Are definitely expecting you as our guest. Barnett Brickner and A. H. Friedland."

Although I have managed to escape colds since the one I had during the first week in January I have not been free from the muscular aches and pains which discourage me from undertaking tasks that call for the exertion of much physical energy. Especially the last two or three weeks I have been troubled as I have been for a number of years around these months with weariness in the legs and pains in the feet. Much as I would like to ignore my physical condition and to go on working and planning and acting cheerfully, I find I cannot do it.

I am still uncertain as to what would be the wises thing for me to do next year, if my health will my permit my doing anything at all. Should I spend the year in Palestine or utilize the leave of absence to make propaganda for the Jewish Community idea? From various quarters I get reports of growing interest in the idea. Now it needs somebody to fan that interest into a flaming desire for integrated organic communal life.

* * *

Sunday, April 7, 1935

Left for Cleveland Thursday night 11:40. When I came to the Zionist luncheon I found about 100 men and women. There was nothing for me to do but make a speech. Fortunately I had prepared something during the couple of hours I had spent on the train in the morning. Starting out with the statement that for many Zionists Zionism is an opiate which diverts their attention from the problem of American Jewish life, I made a plea for interest on their part in the community movement. Rabbi Brickner came forward again with the trite argument about the danger of being ghettoized. I answered it by pointing out that we must be ready to commit ourselves to the principle of cultural hyphenism.

The main purpose for which I went to Cleveland was to occupy Armand Cohen's pulpit at the Jewish Center Friday night. He had sent me a telegram inviting me to come and offering to pay me $75 in addition to expenses. I wired back that I would accept the expenses but that I preferred to have them buy 25 copies of my book for distribution among colleges and public libraries. I entitled my talk "What to Live for as a Jew." I put a tremendous amount of effort into the delivery and I believe I succeeded in getting it across. There were about 1000 people in the audience.

I was delighted to learn that a number of study groups had been formed for the purpose of studying my book and that Dr. Mann of Sinai Temple in Chicago had one such group in his congregation.

Cohen told me about the competitive spirit which existed among the congregations, every rabbi trying to snatch members from every other rabbi. Brickner and his wife seem to be exceptionally aggressive in their pursuit after members. The women usually precede their husbands in joining the Reformist temples by becoming members of the sisterhoods of those temples. This is part of the game of

social climbing. The husbands usually belong to as many congregations as they can in order to augment their business. When as in the case of what was formerly Novak's congregation a number secede and therefore belong to the "doubtful" category, if one of the latter group should take sick there is a race between the two rabbis to be the first to visit him so as to get his patronage. A case has even occurred in which the dying person was asked by one of the rabbis to ask the would be survivors to invite that rabbi to officiate at the funeral.

From what Cohen told me, Rabbi Silver is by no means as black as Samuel Weisgal et al paint him, and as I have come to imagine him to be. In fact, I am rather inclined to think well of him for having the courage to doubt Weisgal's honesty in the manipulation of funds. When I learned that Samuel's enmity doted from the time that Silver had recommended that Samuel's salary as Zionist speaker be reduced from $7500 to $5000 I became inclined to think well of Silver. The fact that Silver himself was receiving at the time $18,000 a year has nothing to do with his attempt to prevent public funds from being squandered, especially when they were running low. That does not mean that I approve of a rabbi's drawing such a huge salary. He ought, by right, to be afraid of any such sum because of its corrupting influence. Besides, a good part of it ought to go to Jewish education.

Saturday morning I attended the services at the Jewish Center. There were about 175 people present and I gave a short talk on the Haftarah.(Noaman showed the way to be a Jew outside Palestine.)

I had accepted Glucksman's invitation to speak at the Annual Welfare Board Meeting which took place today. I am very glad I spoke because the occasion was such as to make my message quite effective. I spke on the Center and the Community. This time I had an outline only and spoke extemporaneously. The talk was very successful and Judge Lehman who had introduced me, complimented me highly on it.

* * *

Sunday, April 14, 1935

Last Friday I had occasion to telephone to Glucksman about helping the students of the Graduate School for Jewish Social Work with information about the various aspects of the problem of communal organization. Incidentally, I asked him about the possibility of seeing a transcript of the address I had delivered last Sunday and of the discussion that followed it. I was rather annoyed at the authoritative tone with which he informed me that I did not come up to his expectations (he didn't use that expression but he intimated it) because I did not proceed along such pedagogic lines as he employed. I should have remembered, he said, that the people I talked to were ill-prepared to understand my approach to the problem of Jewish life and I should not have proposed such revolutionary measures as reconstructing the synagogue and the rabbinate. To those among the audience who belong to the class of lay leaders my remarks sounded, he said, on the basis from their reaction to my address, like a call to return to the ghetto. It seems to me that most of our people are suffering from a form of claustrophobia which I would designate ghettophobia. All efforts to build up an integrated and creative community life must begin with the process of overcoming the mental resistances which arise from this Jewish phobia. One can detect this phobia in the objection one hears so often from the most orthodox as well as from the modernized among our people against activities

which stress the Jewish aspect of our lives. The argument takes the form of "it's too Jewish" or "Why always have Jewish subjects?" or "Jewish matters belong to the pulpit and the synagogue."

Last Wednesday I went to Rochester to deliver the first of the two lectures which had been arranged for me by the Seminary office. I had been scheduled to speak before the men's club of Rabbi Jeremiah Berman's Temple (Beth El) Wednesday night and the night following at Wilkes Barre before the congregation of Temple Israel headed by Rabbi Louis M. Levitsky. The latter had communicated with me more than once about my coming, but from Berman I had not haard a word. I had to ask the Seminary office to wire him to meet me when I would get to Rochester. When I arrived at 5:55 P.M. he was waiting at the station with his car. He informed me that his wife had recently given birth to a baby and had just returned from the hospital and said he would take me to some hotel where I could make arrangements to stay overnight. After leaving my things at the Seneca we drove to his house. There I met his wife and his two children, a little girl over two and the newly born boy. The little girl's name is Rebecca and the baby's name is Simeon. I mention this because these names were practically the first topic of conversation which gave me an idea of the attitude of Berman's people toward things Jewish. I learned that the congregation had objected to the baby's being called Simon because it was "too Jewish." They preferred Simeon. They aren't over happy about the fact that the little girl is called Rebecca. Their own children they give such names as Gwendolyn, Hyacinthe, Malcolm, Lois, etc. The Hebrew school teacher finds it difficult at times to tell from the names he is given of the children in his class whether they are boys' or girls' names.

While Berman was driving me from the station I got him to tell me about his congregation. It consists of about 300 members or heads of families. The total average expense to each family is about $75. They carry a mortgage of about $80,000 and their budget amounts to about $23,000. They have worked out the process of financing in such a way as to be able to balance their budget. In that respect they are better off than they were xx during the prosperous years, when they would incur deficits because of inefficient management of the collection of dues, etc. The rabbi's salary is $4500 as compared with $5000 which he received until a few years ago. He has been with them the last seven years.

Though he had no reason to complain of the financial status of the congregation he and his wife expressed intense dissatisfaction with the spiritual status. When he began his ministry the attendance at the Friday night services averaged 450. It now averages 150. Every time he organizes a study group it opens with a group of 40 to 50 and before many weeks are over it dwindles down to 3 or 4. The services Saturday morning are attended by about 75 children and 30 adults. When one or two of the children discontinued the Sabbath morning attendance and he took them to task he had to defend before the Board the stand he had taken. All that his members seem to want is that he should let them alone, and they are perfectly satisfied to let him alone. The members almost without exception have no intellectual interests whatever. They belong to the congregation because it is the respectable thing to do. That is the standard set by the Gentiles, whose interest in their churches extends little beyond formal affiliation.

Berman's religious school on Sundays has an attendance of about 230 and on weekdays of 60 who come four times a week. I was not at all impressed by the kind of teachers he has in his school, and would not at all be surprised that the results are very meagre.

The congregation is headed by a certain Mr. Hart, a very rich Jew, but old, sickly and superstitiously religious. The fact that two of his brothers married outside the faith and were regarded as disgracing the family has had the effect of making a fanatic of Mr. Hart. He attends services daily. The rabbi, who cannot allow his president to outdo him in religiosity, has to follow suit and do likewise. Hart gives liberally to Yeshibot and to all kinds of bearded fakers, but he wouldn't give one cent to the Seminary because he can't understand how professors can have anything to do with the study of Torah.

The community according to Berman, numbers 50,000 Jews. (According to figures in SAJ diary there are 33,000 in Rochester). Of these he says only about six to seven thousand are affiliated with a synagogue. There seems to be quite a contingent of "Arbeiter Ring" Jews but Berman didn't display much intimate knowledge about them. From the entire trend of the conversations I had with him and his wife, I infer that he is a disheartened man. They complained bitterly of the apathy on the part of the congregation to all things Jewish. So depressing an effect does this have on the Bermans that they are planning to move to Palestine. He wouldn't want, he said, his children to be brought up in the environment of his congregation.

To compensate for his spiritual frustration he has acted on the suggestion made to him by Rabbi Levitsky and cultivated the habit of spending an hour every morning with an old time talmudist in the study of Gemara. He realizes that it is an escape, but he finds he needs it to overcome the sense of spiritual isolation.

Who is to blame for the Jewishly moribund condition of that group of 300 families - 1000 Jews, the rabbi or that congregation? I am inclined, if not to put the blame on the rabbi, at least to attribute that condition to him. He is intellectually a second or third rate man and temperamentally very sluggish. That is something he cannot help.

If anyone is to be blamed it is the Seminary for allowing a man of his shortcomings to be entrusted with so important a position. I am quite sure if a man with the calibre of a Shlomon Goldman, Steinberg or Levitsky had been given charge of such a group, he would have succeeded in creating a Jewish spirit among them. To quote but one instance of Berman's phlegmatism: in all the time I spent with him he never made the slightest reference to my book. Not till an hour before I left, when I asked him point blank whether he had read the book did he say anything about it, and what he said showed that he had hardly looked at it.

Although by the time I had to give the lecture I had been scheduled to gi ve on the evolution of the Jewish religion I had learned but part of the sad story recounted above, that part was enough to dampen my spirit, and to make me regret that I had ever undertaken to speak on such a subject to a blank-minded group of Jews. I tried my utmost to interest the people in what I had to say but I doubt whether I succeeded with more than a few. There were only about 50 men at the supper which was served before the lecture and for the lecture there came about 100 more people including about 75 women. The Metropolitan Company which had come to Rochester and gave opera that same night took away part of what would have been my audience. All in all my stay in Rochester did not hearten me in my endeavor to build up Jewish life in this country.

From Rochester I went to Wilkes Barre. There I found conditions which are the very antithesis of those in Rochester, and which prove affirmatively what the latter proved negatively, that the fate of Judaism in this country hangs upon the kind of spiritual leaders the seminaries send out. I could not say the seminaries produce, because they have a very small share in the actual training for the rabbinate. It is in the selection of the men for the rabbinate that the seminaries play the most important part. If a Seminary like the one I am in were

to know what it ought to do, it would have seen to it that a man like Levitsky with his remarkable executive and educational ability should somehow be enabled to put that ability to such use as to have the other men profit by it. A man like Levitsky should have been appointed by the Seminary as a sort of consultant and visiting rabbi to visit the rabbis in their various communities, and suggest improvements in the rabbi's method of functioning wherever needed.

What Levitsky did with his congregation which he built up from the very bottom is a marvel of accomplishment. His present membership is 250 families. The budget including interest on a $100,000 mortgage amounts to $34,000. Of that amount $11,500 goes for educational purposes, in comparison with $6000 spent in 1929. He preaches twice a week to an attendance that shows not the least sign of dwindling, although he has been in that community these last 13 years. The educational work with the adults has been kept up with unwavery regularity. I have met some young women who five years ago did not an alef from a bet, have learned to read and translate modern Hebrew poetry, and who are still going strong at the rate of five hours homework per week.

The first thing Levitsky spoke to me about was the interest displayed by his people in my book, as a result of the two lectures he had delivered on it preparatory to my visit. With us in the car was a Mr. Weiss who had come with him to meet me at the station. Levitsky later described to me this Mr. Weiss as a young man about 35 who since the war had worked himself up from a borrowed $1000 with which he opened a shoe store to the ownership of 42 stores. Yet there was not a single lecture of Levitsky's that Weiss ever failed to attend. Nor was Weiss the only one who though at first completely disinterested in Judaism, had under Levitsky's influence become an active participant in Jewish cultural work.

Levirsky was not content with my merely giving the lecture I had been scheduled to give. He had the Board of Trustees and their wives take supper together in my honor and had asked me in a letter that I be their guest and say a few words to them in recognition of the contributing over $500 they had made to the Seminary. I had accepted the invitation and when we were through with supper, Levitsky and a certain Mr. Cohen (head of the educational committee) said some nice things about me and I reciprocated by saying some nice things about Levitsky and the congregation. This reception as well as the pleasure of seeing some evidences of what can be done to build up Jewish life, if there is he proper leadership, put me into a good mood for the address I had come to give. The additional circumstances that I had worked it over and improved its organization and that the audience seemed far more capable of following with interest the subject I was lecturing on, contributed tothe success of the evening.

* * *

Sunday, April 21, 1935

The last time I saw Karpf which was about two weeks ago, he told me of a conversation he had had with Cyrus Adler in reference to the communist "uprising" among some of the students of the Graduate School. Adler pointed out to him that if the students had been placed under the influence of some one who would have given them a religious outlook, such a thing would not have happened. As for Kaplan, he is a radical himself. Karpf then informed him that he was mistaken about me and that, on the contrary, I exerted "a wholesome influence" on them. Adler said he was pleased to hear that from him.

Last Monday I took part in a discussion of the problem of "community" as one of a group representing social and educational workers who were preparing a collective statement for the coming convention (June 20) of the two associations. Present were Jacobs, Beckelman (of the Bronx House to which they were transferred from the YMHA of 92 St. I believe because they are suspected of radicalism), Chipkin, Eugene Kohn, Benderly.

The services on he first day of Pesah were well attended (nearly 400 people). I spoke on "Ghettophobia." The talk went across beautifully.

This morning I spoke in Rabbi Jacob Katz's synagogue to a motley group of about 175 people. The reason I accepted his invitation was that he had promised to take 25 copies of my book. That was also the reason for my going to Cleveland. I hoped to succeed in the same way with Rabbi Magil of Buffalo. I expect to be in Buffalo next Saturday night to speak before the Regional Council of Federations. Magil wanted that I should occupy his pulpit the Friday night preceding. But apparently he has not been able to get his people to promise to buy the 25 copies. I charge them $3.33 a copy. It costs me $1.65. Having ordered 500 I shall have to pay Macmillans $825. That is for me a large sum of money but I don't see how I would have refrained from ordering a second printing, since there is still some demand for the book.

* * *

Sunday, April 28, 1935

At the seventh day Pesah services, Mrs. Irma Lindheim gave a talk on what Zionism has done to awaken the Jewish consciousness in her.

Many people were deeply moved and I among them. It was not so much what she said or how she said it that brought the tears to our eyes as the fact that she suggested the idea that Palestine might put an end to the sense of homelessness which torments us Jews at the present time throughout the rest of the world, and our "free America" not excepted.

Friday morning I left for Buffalo. In spite of the indefinite reply from Magil and Polakoff about purchasing the books, I had wired that I would occupy the pulpit of the Beth El Temple. Chas. Polakoff met me at the station and took me to the Lenox Hotel. From there he took me to his home where I had dinner together with Rabbi Magil and his wife. The services began at 8:00. By 8:45 when I started speaking there were about 700 people in he audience. I gave again the talk on "What to Live for as a Jew." The people seemed to have liked it, although I myself have been growing tired of it. It lacked the freshness it had for me when I gave it at Cleveland.

From the conversations with Magil I learned that Buffalo had a Jewish population of 18 to 20,000. As in Rochester and Syracuse there is no genuine interest in things Jewish. Religious affiliation is merely a form of meeting a social expectation and is dominated entirely by the principle of social climbing. A congregation like Beth El is a most heterogenous group containing Jews who balk at the playing of the organ, and object to a social entertainment during Sefira days, and Jews who balk at Hebrew in the service. The criterion of the rabbi's usefulness is the number of invitations to speak he receives from Gentiles and the opportunity to speak over the radio. The services are listened to passively by the audience and congregational singing is made impossible by the operatic ambitions of cantor and choir and by the inability of the people to read Hebrew. The absence of all standards can be seen from the fact that they had such a variety of rabbis

as Drob, who is an old fashioned maggid as far as his outlook is concerned, without a maggid's native eloquence; Eichler who was a good mixer married to a woman who hated Jews and Judaism. He was a Reformist in his way of thinking, but having had to make a living for a time by working for the Zionist organization, he indulged at times in the Zionitic jargon which I am quite sure was in no way related to the rest of his thinking. When he died his wife insisted upon having a Christian undertaker to take care of the body. (That undertaker, incidentally, takes charge of funerals for many people in that congregation. Magil had officiated the very day I came to Buffalo at such a funeral. The undertaker told Magil that he was often asked to be the tenth man at the service for the dead.) After Eichler they had Israel Efros who probably regards himself the equal of Bialik in poetry and of Maimonides in philosophy. He undoubtedly has a good deal of knowledge and even some ability as a Hebrew poet. In a living language he would rate very low. But in his own estimation he is a great man who had to demean himself for a ~~xix~~ salary of $10,000 a year from people for whom he had nothing but Olympian contempt. He honored them by delivering a talk every Friday night, but the effort to stoop to so low a level exhausted him. With such an attitude toward his work the congregation almost went to pieces. And now it has Magil. He means well but he lacks personality. I can't put my finger on what it is that prevents me from growing enthusiastic about the possibility of his doing anything of outstanding merit. He does not seem to be eager for ideas or for improvements either in his congregation or in the community.

It is evident that a group mentally conditioned by four such disparate job holders could not be moulded into a like-minded solidarity with a collective personality of its own. The case I believe is somewhat different with the Reformist Temple headed by Dr. Fink. From the

that I heard concerning him from Magil and from the impression he made on me when I met him last night, he appears to be a rather intelligent person who knows what he wants and seems to want just a little more than to hold on to his job. At least his school seems to be more successful than the other Jewish schools and he is making a serious effort to build up a weekday school. This is an astounding feat in a Reformist congregation.

I learned of the existence of a third congregation - "Emanuel" I believe - which consists of people who had been brought up in strictly Orthodox fashion but who want to acquire a little modern polish. They should have been the last people in the world to take a Hebrew Union College graduate as rabbi. But they seem to have gotten a bargain and they grabbed it. He introduced the Union Prayer Book but they were none the wiser for it until it was pointed out to them that it had implications of an anti-nationalistic character and that it committed them to a conception of Jewish life altogether our of keeping with their background. Now they are sending away that rabbi and are negotiating with Morris Adler, of this year's graduating class in the Seminary. ~~Two~~ Two people, the vice-president and another officer, came to ask what I thought of Adler who had spoken there recently and whom they want to engage as rabbi. They told me about the Baptist Church they had bought for a nominal sum and their consequent growth in numbers during the last year. By raising the membership dues they lost some of their old members but others came in. It would of course be expecting too much to ask them to realize the serious significance of keeping out Jews who can't afford to pay larger dues. But this makes evident the dangerous alliance between religion and financial status.

In addition to the inherently wrong principle underlying congregational organization there is the inevitable spirit of competition and rivalry among the congregations and their rabbis. Even the rabbini-

cal seminaries share that competitive spirit. When a pulpit becomes vacant the three rabbinical training schools begin pulling wires for their graduates. So long as the competition is confined to the three - the JIR, Hebrew Union College and the Seminary - there is nothing of a vituperative character in the contest. But if the Yeshbot has a chance of getting its man in, then the belittling of the work of the other institutions becomes the order of the day.

My main purpose in coming to Buffalo was to speak before the Upstate Regional Conference of Jewish Social Agencies. The conference is one of the series arranged by the Council of Federations, similar in character to the one I took part in at Providence last November. I worked very hard on the talk I gave last night, but I had the satisfaction of having gotten across my message with regard to the need of organic community. The various discussions with the community group contributed to my formulating my ideas with greater force and clarity. All day Friday on the train I was at work thinking about what I was to say, and to my regret found myself compelled to spend some hours on Saturday in putting down my thoughts in writing. I don't mind writing on the Sabbath. In fact, I sometimes feel that the prohibition of writing is an unnecessary restriction when it inhibits the expression of ideas that might otherwise be lost. But to write under pressure is, in my opinion, a definite violation of the Sabbath. I therefore hope I won't ever have to do that again.

* * *

Tuesday, April 30, 1935

I attended the second annual meeting of the N.Y. Seminary Branch which took place tonight at the Seminary. The two main speakers were Norman Bentwich and Milton Steinberg. Bentwich spoke on Judaism in Palestine. In the course of his address he mentioned the fact that

the Jews in Palestine lived their Judaism as a civilization. Milton Steinberg made the point that the cultivation of Jewish higher learning was necessary as a means of counteracting the possible effect of anti-Semitism on the Jew. When Steinberg was through Adler got up and voiced his disagpeement with both speakers, but it was chiefly Steinberg who seemed to have irritated him im emphasizing the problem created by anti-Semitism. Adler spoke very excitedly repeating for the thousandth time Schechter's bon (?) mot about refusing to be a problem, and shouting that if Jews had led decent lives there would be no problem. Then alluding to Bentwich's remarks, Adler said that the law will not go out from Zion but will have to go from the diaspora to Zion (unless, I suppose the Jews in Palestine will act differently from the way they do).

To utter such words as "problem," "ideology," "Jewish civilization" in the hearing of Adler is like waving a red flag in front of a bull.

* * *

Saturday night, May 4, 1935

Among the symptoms of disintegration of Jewish life in addition to those referred to in preceding entries, are the following:

1. Bar mizvah celebrations are occasions for wild cocktail parties and ribald vaudevile acts. The upstart Jewish rich spend money on entertainers, among whom are semi-nude chorus girls who perform indecent dances in front of the table where the bar-mizvah and his young friends are seated.

2. On Pesah and Shabuot Jewish hotels in seashore and mountain resorts do a big business by holding services. Free lance cantors and choirs conduct those services.

3. The provisional synagogue is an evil of old standing.

Petrified mediocrity - that's Cyrus.

* * *

Sunday, May 5, 1935

I am eager to saturate my mind with Hebrew vocabulary and idioms. For that purpose I was just reading the first volume of (p.13) אחדות העבודה In the midst of an eloquent passage by B. Katzenelson about what the Palestinian wokers can contribute to the workers in the diaspora there occurs the phrase מרכזיות הגסיון הלכתי. That recalled to me the promise I had made some time ago to Harry Liebovitz to look up the law about transferring a body from one grave to another. He bought plottage in the cemetery ground recently acquired by the SAJ and he would like to transfer his father's body to that plottage. On consulting יורה דעה סימן 363 I found that the entire interdict is based on a superstition and that even from the standpoint of that superstition there are loopholes and exceptions. I shall therefore tell Liebovitz to go right ahead with his purpose.

The reason I mention all this is to exemplify the contrast between the kind of thing one discusses in Palestine as a means of keeping the Jewish people alive and the kind of thing one thinks about as a means of advancing Judaism in the diaspora.

* * *

Monday, May 6, 1935

Last night the SAJ held its thriteenth annual meeting. It ran off smoothly. The way I performed my part pleased the people. Just when I have reason to be most disheartened I grit my teeth and compel myself to assume the calmness and determination of a commander who leads a forlon hope detachment. Under ordinary circumstances, if I had to go through an induction ceremony towhich nine out of thirty-five newly admitted members reported, I would have collapsed. But having made up my mind to go through with it, even if there had been only one present, I was entirely unruffled and brought out my thoughts with clearness and force. Likewise with the talk I gave to the membership

body which was represented only by a third of its constituents. Yet I did not get angry nor scold. I made use of a simile through which I might have vented my real feelings, but I held back. I refer to the fact that I compared Ira and myself to a double engine puffing away when pulling a train through a mountainous country. The membership was the train and the mountainous country was the American environment plus the additional distraction of these depression years.

In alluding to my preaching at the SAJ I said that I didn't try to hand out homiletic lollipops. If I did give them hard nuts to crack I was sure they would find them more nutritious and wholesome than they would the lollipops.

In urging the study of Hebrew, I compared the attempt to be a Jew without knowledge of Hebrew to traveling vicariously by collecting steamship folders.

Every time I talk that way the people remark to me afterwards that I have grown benign and mellow. They forget that they have been saying that to me the last ten years. This is, I think, about as long as I have been practicing the mental state of resignation in the face of the inevitable. Somewhere in this journal I am sure I made the entry about the bear on the ice floe that is drifting into warmer climes and melting away.

* * *

Monday, May 6, 1935

The discussion today in the class in the Graduate School dealt with the nature of the congregation. I wanted to emphasize its futility as a means to Jewish life. In the heat of the argument I let slip a remark for which I am profoundly sorry. To make the point that the Jews are spiritually demoralized as a result of their not having organic community, I made a sweeping statement about them which I had no right to make when I said that they were money mad. Coming at a time

when there is a good deal of excitement on account of a liberal like Dreiser having accused the Jews of being money mad, such a statement was stupid and ill advised. I no sooner let slip the unfortunate remark than I was pulled up short by one or two of the students who are communists. They expressed their resentment quite heatedly, and I had to do all I could to explain away the asperity of what I had said.

I don't have to enter into any lengthy explanations to show how unfair I was in implying that the Jews are more money mad than the other elements of the population. The economic regime under which we live brings out the worst in all people irrespective of race, nationality or religious tradition.

Something must have been annoying me to have made me lose my head. Probably the suppression of my real feelings at the SAJ meeting last night, and the failure of the students to display a genuine interest in the problem that was being discussed were the cause for my outbreak. If I could only discipline myself so that I would remember what Felix Adler said about anger as in need of being resisted because of its tendency to upset the very purposes ~~xxx~~ one cherishes most, I would not have to be wasting my energy in trying to live down many a thing I say in the heat of anger.

In one of the preceding volumes I find fault with the ancients for their having pictured Goad as every wrathful (p.15 ספרי דברים פיסקא).
I see now that they weren't altogether wrong. They projected into their conception of God what anyone who is sensitive to the stupidities and cruelties of human beings in their dealings with one another must feel. The more one learns of what is going on in the world the higher must one's blood pressure become. When I read this morning, e.g. in the volume ארץ ישראל ועמה about the iniquitous apportioning of land to the Bedouins who were unable to cultivate it, and withholding land from the Jewish legionaires whom it was the duty of the British govern-

ment to assist in their effort to settle in Palestine, I was wild with indignation at the injustice perpetrated on our people. That too may have contributed to the unhappy frame of mind during the session at the Graduate School. All in all, outside of the desire to contribute to the happiness of my own family, which is the only worthwhile purpose I still can do something to further, there is practically nothing I can live for wholeheartedly. I am one of the helpless victims of the infernal capitalistic system. May God's wrath descend upon it with the fury of a thousand hells and shock it into death with the voltage pent up in the storms of vindictive rage engendered in the hearts of the innocent and defenseless against their pitiless tormentors.

* * *

Wednesday, May 15, 1935

The foregoing experience taught me a lesson which I had the opportunity of applying almost fortwith. I received a letter from Nathan Weissman, the managing editor of the American Jewish Outlook of Pittsburgh, dated May 7, which read as follows:

"I am enclosing a letter we received today from one of Pittsburgh's leading Jewish men. The letter as you will probably recognize, refers to a report sent us by the Jewish Telegraphic Agency on the talk made by you at the opening of the Up-State N.Y. Regional Conference of Jewish Social Agencies.

"Dr. Lewin is a member of the Board of Public Education here and coming from him the charge that we 'respect and love only money' seems to me, frankly, somewhat absurd but nevertheless serious. I would appreciate hearing from you regarding his comment on your own remarks, as well as upon this latter statement."

The letter from Dr. A. L. Lewin (3703 Penn Ave., Pittsburgh) to the Editor reads as follows:

"In your number Friday, May 3, 1935 I read with great interest the words uttered in Buffalo by Prof. M.M. Kaplan. Every word of criticism that he has uttered is unfortunately only too true. I would like to ask 'What has he done in the way of corrective measures? Has he worked out a plan whereby the Jew could become an integral part of citizenship and be a credit to that citizenship and Jewry at the same time?' A reply would be very interesting.

"A few weeks ago you stated in your editorial that our big trouble is the unaffiliated Jew. It would be interesting to know the cause of unaffiliation and then to correct it.

"We are in danger because we respect and love money only -- character, education, personality are not considered. We have many 'services' but none to create a useful, respectful, unselfish Jewry.

"Hope you will be the Moses to lead us out of this complex."

My reply follows:

"I have your letter together with a copy of the letter Dr. Lewin addressed to you. No doubt, the anarchic condition of American Jewish life is a depressant of moral and spiritual standards. The statement, however, as formulated by Dr. Lewin to the effect 'that we respect and love money only -- character, education and personality are not considered' is one of those sweeping generalizations which cannot be true, since Dr. Lewin is himself a Jew who apparently does not love money only, and find as he must be well aware, there are many other Jews like him.

"He certainly has no means of proving that the Jews are more money-mad than other people. Money-madness is inherent in our present economic system. It is only a more realistic name for the 'rugged individualism' which our chambers of commerce are working overtime to reinstate. I am certain that on calmer consideration, Dr. Lewin would hesitate to ascribe to the Mitchells and the Insulls, to the Morgans and the Rockefellers, less love of money than of their fellowmen. And

these are our typical Americans.

"The truth of the matter is that Dr. Lewin is evidently interested in the welfare of his people, and is very impatient with their inertia which prevents them from taking the measures necessary to make Jewish life inherently creative and worthwhile. But impatience will not get us anywhere. Not even Moses escaped its consequences when in a moment of bitterness he cried out 'Hear ye rebels!' Let Dr. Lewin channel his impatience rather into cooperation with those who feel as he does the need of organic Jewish community.

"In answer to his question whether I have worked out a plan for such a community, I wish to say that while I have envisaged such a plan and have presented it on various occasions, I can see no value to any plan emerging from the mind of any one person. I have, accordingly suggested at some of the recent conferences of the Council of Federations and Welfare Funds that the Council call into being a 'Planning Commission' representative of all Jewish interests and activities. Such a Commission, after an intensive study of the various phases of the problem of Jewish organization, would be in a position to formulate a plan that would have far greater worth and authority than that proposed by an individual."

The thrity-fifth annual convention of the Rabbinical Assembly took place at Temple Beth El, Rockaway Park, L.I. May 13-15. That is where Robert Gordis functions as rabbi. Having been chairman of the convention arrangements committee he was instrumental in gaining the consent of the Executive Committee of the RA to hold the convention in his temple. The fact that it might be interpreted as exploiting the RA for his own prestige apparently did not even enter his mind, because he seems to be so Seminary-beat at the present time that anything which might contribute to his getting there is certain to appear to

him as perfectly legitimate. Now that Finkelstein is fully grounded he is in turn grooming his prospective underlings and they in turn are industriously rehearsing the parts they will have to play. Simon Greenberg and Robert Gordis have been cast for their parts and everything is hunky-dory. Alexander Basel hovers about in the wings in the capacity of super flunky in the hope of being able to get Adler to bring into his Schiff Center (or more correctly All Saints Center) the Jewish "big shots" for the purpose of getting them to throw in some "mazuma" into the coffers of his institution. He is then sure of saving up enough money to retire from the ministry and from the cemeteries where he functions as a sort of educated and high-class (p.18) reciter for all and sundry. To be in the good graces of Adler one has to be identified as an anti-Kaplanite. Such an opportunity presented itself to him when Gordis was making up the part of the program in which my book was to be discussed. Basel offered to take up the cudgels for traditonal Judaism. How he carried out his mission is part of the subsequent story.

I was unable to attend the day sessions on Monday. But I came to the evening sessions described in the program as the "Public Academic Session." I had been hesitating whether to go or not but finally decided to go in order to carry out the promise I had made to Dr. Ginzberg that I would ask the members of the Rabbinical Assembly to purchase sets of Judah Kaufman's edition of the "Moreh." I don't know why I allow myself to be inveigled into doing things I don't like. With Mrs. Kaufman pestering me and Ginzberg seconding her, I was unable to say no. But I regretted it later. This is what happened. I listened with a sense of resigned boredom to Adler's address on Schechter and to Abraham A. Neuman's talk on Freiman's edition of Maimonides' Responsa. Then Margolis called on me to say a few words about Judah Kaufman's edition of the "Moreh Nebrikim." The sight of an audience melting away after the

long ordeal, and Margolis' turning to me as I went up the platform and making a sort of Eddie Cantor face at me as he urged me to say a few words, sent the blood to my head and I found it hard to make the simple announcement I had intended to make. When all was over I took Margolis to task for his arrogance and we let go at each other the pent up feelings that we entertain for each other. I am glad to say that last night he and I made up, and that I had the good sense to take the initiative.

I attribute that extra dose of good sense to the fact that I had a successful day yesterday. In the morning Basel was the first to discuss my book as part of the program entitled "Toward a Vital Program for American Judaism." The subheading was "Dr. Kaplan's Philosophy of Judaism." I had been after him all last week to let me have a copy of his paper. He promised me twice solemnly that he would let me have it, and in the end did not let me have it. The reason was that he had read only a few chapters of the book and glanced hurriedly at the rest of it. He thought all that he needed was to snipe at some of the main points and he would achieve his purpose. Many of the members of the Assembly were disgusted with the attitude he displayed toward his task and with the inanity of his remarks. He was followed by Max Arzt of Scranton who had prepared a 35 page carefully worked out essay. When my turn came I sailed into Basel for assuming that he didn't have to know the book before he criticized it. I countered his attack with body blows that sent him reeling. It was as merciless an onslaught as I ever wielded against a combatant. I could see that there were many in the audience who were delighted with the pummeling I administered to him. Arzt, on the other hand, I treated cordially and seriously. He had done me the kindness of sending me his paper in time for me to mull over it. That enabled me to discover what was basically wrong with his entire approach. I came to realize that he was attempting to bolster up the philosophy of Conservative Judaism by adopting the vocabulary

of Judaism as a civilization. The preconceived purpose of his prevented him from realizing the implications of the very ideas in the book which he agreed with. I exposed his fallacies one after another and succeeded in making out a good case for my approach, at least as far as the majority of those present were concerned.

Fortunately I was sufficiently collected and self-possessed to manouvre my counter-attacks in such a way as to render the most telling. I knew enough not to continue with my discussion while the people were getting hungry. I asked for permission to postpone the conclusion of my remarks for the afternoon session and when at that session I realized that I might not get a chance to conclude my argument if I permitted the reports which I had given the right of way to continue, I had the courage to ask for the floor which I had surrendered. It was granted to me and I finished my job. This put me into good spirits for the rest of the day.

The rest of the afternoon session was taken up with a pseudo-scholarly paper on "The Canons of Interpretation of Jewish Law" and the discussion of it by Ben Zion Bokser and Robert Gordis. Then came Louis M. Epstein's proposal concerning "The Adjustment of the Jewish Marriage Law to Present Day." At the last meeting of the Committee on Law I urged that it be authorized to recommend the form of adjustment he had worked out as the one we all agreed to as the best under the circumstances. My belief is that it is advisable to get the Rabbinical Assembly into action in law pertaining to (p.19) דינין אחרים. This might in time lead to genuine adjustment of Jewish law to life. Of course I refer only to relationships בין אדם לחברו In all matters בין אדם למקום I would abrogate the category law for the simple reason as I had occasion to explain in answering Arzt, that law is a category which is applicable only to cases where sanctions can be enforced. Since that is no longer conceivable in all ritual matters, they cannot possibly be classified under the concept of law.

Monday, May 20, 1935

The accompanying picture (p.20) was taken last Thursday when Lena and I went downtown to arrange for our passports to Palestine.

In my free moments my thoughts revert to the problem what to do when I get to Palestine, whether to stay there only during the summer, to spend there the whole of the sabbatical year, or to plan to settle there permanently. If I were satisfied to let well enough alone and could manage to become absorbed in some literary or scholarly work that would not touch upon contemporary issues, I would be able to lead a far happier and more peaceful life than most people I know. But I am too restless, too ambitious and too socially minded to retire into my shell. This is why I am continually agitated and in a state of inner turmoil.

Much against their own will, the SAJ board members yielded to my plan for the mural by Miss Temima Nimtzowitz as a memorial to Israel Unterberg. She did a fine piece of work. But unfortunately the auditorium of the SAJ, especially that part where the mural is placed, is so drab and ugly that it doesn't do justice to her painting. That setting is paralleled by the reaction of the members themselves who have no appreciation of the significance and the beauty of the murals. To improve that setting, both human and environmental, is a heartbreaking task, indeed. When the murals began to attract attention some of the members of the family were afraid that the memorial purpose of those murals might be eclipsed.

Last night the memorial services were held and the mural unveiled. Nathan Levy, one of the members of the SAJ, had painted a portrait of Unterberg which was also unveiled. That portrait is a very amateurish affair and the notion of having it play an important part in

in the exercises together with the murals seemed quite ridiculous to me. But I had to keep a straight face and make believe it was a fine piece of work. A more difficult ordeal of course was the delivery of the eulogy. But, remembering how poorly I do when I am not well prepared with a eulogy in which I have to engage in considerable idealizing, I made it my business to have my talk worked out carefully in my mind beforehand. The services, including my talk, lasted just an hour and everybody seemed to be pleased. Thank G. that's over.

* * *

Tuesday, June 11, 1935--S.S. Excambion

Whether because my mind is tired or because of the crowded and mixed character of the happenings during the last three weeks, I find it rather difficult to begin making the entries for that time.

On Tuesday, May 21, I attended a luncheon of the Women's Division of the SAJ, made my speech and left.

On Monday, May 27, the Reconstructionist dinner took place at the Seminary dining room. The meal cost $1.00 per person and we had no difficulty in getting the maximum attendance - 150. I took charge of the speaking arrangements and succeeded in organizing the discussion better than I had believed it possible. The dinner had been called for 6:30. I then discovered that it couldn't be served before 8:00. In order to forestall the usual grumbling about the lateness of Jewish affairs I asked those who were there to assemble in the basement auditorium of the Teachers Institute building. There I gave them my introductory talk. I spoke of reconstruction as the substitute for belief in the world to come, and suggested a five point program: 1. The Hebraization of American Jewish life; 2. The reorganization of communal life; 3. The reorientation to religion; 4. The reconstruction of the social and economic order; and 5. The furtherance of esthetic creativity in Jewish life.

When the dinner was over I called upon those present to comment upon topic No. 1, each speaker to limit himself to three minutes. After two or three had spoken I called upon Chipkin to deal qith the questions raised b y the speakers. I did the same with topic no. 3 and asked Dr. Boxer to do the same for his topic. He was followed by speakers from the floor whom I had asked to address themselves to topic no. 4. Among them was Abr. Duker who attacked the rabbis for their communist leanings. Dr. Israel Goldstein gave an excellent talk in answer to what had been said on that topic. I then called upon Rabbi Lang to suggest some practical measures for implementing the idea of Reconstructionism. In introducing him I mentioned the fact that I had received affirmative replies from about twenty rabbis in answer to my question whether they would undertake to lead Reconstructionist groups in their congregations.

By that time the hour had grown late and I saw that I would have to omit further discussion from the floor. I called upon Eugene Kohn to speak briefly on topic No. 2. Milton Steinberg elaborated the general idea of Reconstruction and Ira Eisenstein concluded with a talk on topic No. 5. All in all it was a successful affair.

From one-fifth to one-sixth of those who attended the dinner were SAJ members, and their friends. Since the dinner proved so successful I was sure that the SAJ committee entrusted with the financial end of the periodical would go about its work enthusiastically. I was sadly disillusioned, however, when I attended the meeting of that committee Tuesday night, May 28 at Ira's house. Lionel Bernstein kept on insisting that we change the Reconstructionist from a bi-weekly into a monthly. William Salzman who realized how deeply that suggestion hurt me, left the meeting determined to find some way of continuing the periodical as a bi-weekly and after a few days I received a letter from him saying that he had succeeded in formulating a plan for that purpose.

Since then another meeting of the committee has taken place, and his plan was adopted.

After the Seminary Faculty meeting on Friday, May 31, I spoke to Adler about the possibility of my transfering from Homiletics to Jewish Ethics. He asked me to draw up a plan of the courses I would like to give, and said that he would submit my plan to the Faculty. Knowing that without Ginzberg's consent I stood no chance of having my plan adopted, I went to see him that same Friday night about that matter. He would not commit himself since he had nothing to go by. He knew he said I was "a man of parts" but that was all he knew. I assured him that I did not expect him to give me a definite reply; all I wanted was to get his reaction to the plan of the courses, which (plan) I expected to work out during the summer. He replied that he had never refused his advice on matters pertaining to Jewish study.

On Sunday, June 2 the graduation exercises of the Seminary took place in the quadrangle. Because the TI completed twenty-five years of its existence a year ago June I had been invited by Adler to give an address on the TI. Although I had experienced considerable difficulty in the writing of the address, it turned out to be rather good. But even this year the element of ordeal was not wanting, as far as I was concerned. Israel Levinthal's address was a cluster of homiletical sophistries based on falsification of rabbinic dicta and was meant to serve as an attack against me. Then came the climax when Adler made the statement which he said he did at the request of the Board of Trustees, to the effect that the Jews were a religious community long before the destruction of the Second Commonwealth, and that to say we are a race or a culture (meaning of course a civilization) is to place a weapon in the hands of our enemies.

On Monday, June 3, I addressed the Israel Friedlaender Classes This time my talk was a success. I made the point that the addresses at the Seminary graduation exercises indicated the diversity of opinion that existed in Seminary circles. But with it all there was the common denominator -- the desire to see Jewish life lived to the maximum degree possible and the deprecation of minimum programss

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My brother-in-law Jacob H. Rubin died Tuesday morning, June 4. The funeral took place at the SAJ synagogue on Wednesday. I officiated and Elias L. Solomon said a few words in behalf of the Central Jewish Institute of which Jacob had been president for many years.

Friday June 7 was the first day of Shabuot. I preached on Jewish nationhood. My sermon was an answer to Adler's statement on the Sunday preceding.

On Tuesday night last week Naomi and Selma sailed for Palestine. Lena and I boarded the Excambian today; it left at 4:00 P.M. Outside the family the only ones from the SAJ to see me offwere the Ossermans and from the Seminary Chipkin and Mrs. Finkelstein.

On Saturday June 8 Ira made the appeal for the quota of $10,000 which the SAJ had undertaken to raise for the United Jewish Appeal and Palestine Funds. He succeeded in getting many contributions in addition to those originally pledged at my house, and bring the amount pledged up to $8700. Moe Cowen, who is a whimsical bachelor, pledged anonymously $1000. Yesterday his check was in the SAJ office.

Ira's sermon leading up to the appeal was very forceful. But when Harry Liebovitz complimented Ira on the sermon, it was not on its substance but on the fact that it brought results. The people seem to be unable to raise funds for Jewish purposes other than charity, and are coming to measure the efficiency of the rabbi by the success of his appeals.

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Wednesday Night, June 19, 1935

It is a few minutes after 12 midnight. We expect to stop off at Gilbraltar in about an hour. The trip so far has been very pleasant. There has not been a single hour of inclement weather. Everything on board has been all we could want.

W. A. Abright and his family are among the passengers. I thought I would have a chance to talk with him at length and to become acquainted with some of his views, but he is so busy acting the nurse for his four boys that I had only one or two occasions to converse with him. His wife who has been sitting most of the time on the promenade deck, is an indefatigable talker. She seems to know many of the people we know and has a good deal to say about them. I was amazed to learn that she was a convert to Catholicism, originally having been an Episcopalian. Albright himself is the son of a Methodist minister and I presume he has stayed Methodist.

I mentioned to her that I would like to be prsent at one of the Masses which took place on board. She let me have a Missal recently published for young people to enable them to follow the service. The effect which the reading of the Missal had on me was that I put on my tefilin next morning -- something I have not done in a long time -- and recited the morning prayers through the Amidah. My respect for Catholicism did not improve as a result of the conversation I had with one of the priests on board. I learned nothing new about it

except the fact that the doctrine "nihil salus extra ecclesian" applies only to one who realizes that the Catholic religion but refuses to embrace it. The priest told me that Cyprian gave this interpretation to that doctrine. Personally I think that interpretation is meant for "outside consumption" and is not taken seriously, because if it were the very basis of missionary effort would be removed and persecution of those who refuse to accept Catholicism would be precluded.

The first few days I spent a good deal of time on paraphrasing orally Bialik's (p.24) בד הראל פרוי. The last few days I have worked on the opening essay of my "Judaism in Transition." I think I have it in almost final shape.

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(pages 24 - 39 -- June 20, 1935 - August 7, 1935 - all in Hebrew)

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Tuesday, August 13, 1935 - Contedi Savoia

The great difficulty with living in two civilizations, as I propose we Jews should do, is that it creates the necessity of constantly having to resort to choice instead of being carried along by habit. Here, for example, in my own case, I am troubled by the fact that I don't know whether I should continue this journal in Hebrew or whether I am doing the right thing in resuming the writing of it in English. My Jewish conscience tells me I should have used this opportunity to practice Hebrew writing, but my urge to record my experiences tells me that I am still hampered by my inability to write the Hebrew with adequare ease and am therefore sacrificing time and thought to language. It was hard for me to make the choice in this instance. The same must necessarily be true in every phase

of life and self-expression both as a Jew and as a member of another than the Jewish nationality.

There is, however, no alternative to this necessity and we Jews might as well make the best of it. Perhaps in time enough choices will have been made to establish a system of habits which will represent the proper syntheses of the two civilizations.

I have read through on board Bergson's Sources of Morality and Religion. I had had an idea of the book from Bergman's article on it in his (p. 39 ב"ח ע"ש) which I had read in Jerusalem. While I was impressed when I read it, as one must be by Bergson's apt analogies and occasional poetic flashes, I am disappointed when I think of it as a whole. The main idea which I derive from the book is that the concept of humanity as the unit of ethical duty instead of the particular nation to which one belongs is not the outcome of the same biological process as that which has given rise to group morality, but is a new creative act of the vital impulse. Likewise the identification of God not with any of the national or church deities, but with the vital impulse itself is not in direct line of development from the various group religions (which are the outcome of the biological process) but a new creative act of the biological process. Incidentally, I find my distinction between personal and folk religion very similar to his distinction between mythological and mystical religion. But what troubles me about his analysis is that it lends itself to the inference that the creative acts of the vital impulse which give rise to higher religion and higher morality are not means of reenforcing the life current but, on the contrary, of weakening and defeating it. This is what Bergman seems to get out of the book. (The unfortunate analogy of contraception confirms the foregoing impression.) Bergson should have shown that these creative acts have become necessary for the sake of enabling the human species to exist.

With the various groups having been brought into such close proximity with each other that each is affected by the fate of all, the morality of the closed group is suicidal. Likewise with the development of intelligence rendering the mythological religions untenable, there is no other resort for man if he wants to overcome the added contingencies which he envisages and fears than to achieve the higher type of religion. The creative act -- whether of morality or of religion -- is not confined to the prophets and the mystics but embraces the large number of human beings who apply their intelligence to the newly acquired knowledge of man and his environment.

Even more disconcerting than the way Bergson develops his main thesis are some of his applications. These remind me of his war pamphlet in which he proved that the Germans represented matter and the Allies spirit. His evident desire to make out a case for Christianity leads him to regard it as the bearer of the idea of a universal morality - a fact which is contradicted by its having been used by Rome as a last resort in holding its empire together. Likewise his sympathy with Catholicism leads him to find in the Catholic mystics the originators of the true universal religion. All this is utter nonsense. There is much more of the sense for humanity and for that cosmic unity and creativity which gives meaning to life in the social idealists of the last three centuries than in the self-intoxicated mystics, who if they really got at the secret of godhood were unable to communicate it in spite of their proliferate verbosity and their bizarre actions.

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Wednesday, August 14, 1935 - Conte di Savoia

The two discussions I had in Jerusalem with Sholem, Bergman, Goitan, Simon and the others have stimulated my thinking considerably. I wish I had a similar group of people in New York with whom I could discuss fundamental problems.

Those discussions started me thinking anew about the problem of values. By this time the following has crystallized itself in my mind:

The content of consciousness consists of 1) objects, 2) events, 3) relationships and 4) values. 1) Objects are things mediated by one or more senses; 2) events are changes noted in those things; 3) relationships are connections among things and changes; and 4) values are relationships of things and changes to human life with its wants and needs.

The classification of values into the good, the true and the beautiful formulated by the Greek philosophers has become traditional. Its inadequacy becomes apparent the moment we realize that the term good is not coordinate with the other two. Plato identified the Idea of God as the supreme idea, thereby making truth and beauty phases of it. I would therefore have "good" coextensive with value or meaning in all its aspects conceived affirmatively i.e. as conducive to the fullness of human life.

The natural division into which those aspects fall is suggested by the three aspects of the mind's functioning, viz will, feeling and thought.

Since our interest in values is usually accompanied by the pragmatic purpose of having those of an affirmative character prevail the aspect of will ought to be treated as the base or substance with those of feeling and thought as its modes.

Taking then the aspect of will as the base -- which is equivalent to treating feeling and thought as aspects of conduct -- we find it necessary to introduce into the analysis of that aspect the four different levels on which human conduct may be carried on. The difference in levels is a difference in the extent to which the element of intelligence, self-consciousness or human individuality or personality is present.

First is the level of impulse, second the level of authority, third the level of morality, and fourth the level of ethics.

The four levels of conduct are crossed by three concentric horizons representing the three main frames of reference to which the conduct is related. They are 1) the body, 2) the group, 3) the cosmos.

The nature of the science philosophy and esthetics cultivated by human beings in the various stages of their development depends upon the level and the horizon within which such science and esthetics find expression.

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Friday, August 23, 1935

I no sooner landed last Thursday than I learned that Benderly was having trouble with his staff. He acts in the arbitrary and high-handed fashion which one is in the habit of condemning in plutocrats. He is always ready with some new formula to justify his autocratic ruling. Now it is "flexibility necessary for experimentation." In plain words, he can't be happy unless he can hire and fire at will.

A committee of the staff came to see me last Monday. In reply to the note I had written to B. last Thursday he informed me through his office that he wants to speak to me over the phone. I suggested Tuesday noon. I then suggested to him that Rosalsky, he and I meet to discuss the situation. In the meantime I learned that Rosalsky left the country. I am therefore sending the following note to Benderly:

"I have just learned that Judge Rosalsky got married and left the country again. In view of the fact that the school year is about to begin I would suggest that the matter be submitted at once to mediation. This is the policy I would have urged if we had met, and

I urge it now that the meeting cannot be held. If you refuse, I shall be compelled to write to Federation that I have nothing further to do with the matter, and that they should not shirk the responsibility for acting on it, on the ground that they do not interfere in the administration of their constituent agencies."

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Tuesday, September 3, 1935

I went to see Benderly at his camp last Thursday (Aug. 29) to get his side of the story. As I sat and listened to him for about two hours I realized that I was wrong in saying about him the things I did above. Yet upon further consideration of the matter and after having tried to repeat to Ira what Benderly told me, I feel that there is wrong on both sides. How much easier it is to discuss the broad principles for and against Communism than it is to determine what to do, or who is right and who wrong, in a specific situation. There is so much of incompetency, selfishness and intimidation that vitiates the contention of the people on the staff as there is of dictatorship, egotism and bullying that impugns the idealism of Benderly, that I haven't the heart to side with either the one or the other. I have written to Federation that they should try to straighten out the controversy.

Since last Saturday night I have been working feverishly to finish the revision of "Judaism in Transition" which I expect to send to the publishers this week. I had given the manuscript to Eugene Kohn and asked him to make the necessary revisions, but after spending eighteen hours on it he brought it back practically without a single change in the text. Seeing that he was of no help in that respect I buckled down to the task myself. In the essay on Judaism's Attitude toward the Disinherited" I had to do a good deal of tailoring

and to sow together with it the greater part of what was originally to have appeared as a separate essay under the heading of "Marxism and the Jewish Religion."

Jews who take up the cudgels for Communism are bringing their people into a vale which the Gentiles had never imagined the Jews would ever have the temerity to take up and which Jewish tradition most emphatically deprecated. It is the role not merely of defense or fighting back on being attacked, but that of taking a prominent part in aggressive warfare against what they value more than any religion -- their wealth. Those Jewish communists who do it because of their conviction that it is the only way to destroy anti-Semitism repeat in a large measure the mistake of the zealots who believed that the only way to save the Jews was by waging war against Rome. As a desperately battered minority what change have the Jews of surviving in the conflict against a whole world? Granting even that capitalistic society is on its last legs - which is far from being the case and especially in this country - it will be a long time before Communism will gain the upper hand. By that time Jews will be a distant memory. If they will continue to take a prominent part in the class-struggle, they are bound to be the first victims in the clash of the contending forces.

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Saturday night, September 7, 1935

I handed in the manuscript of "Judaism in Transition" to Macmillans last Thursday, although I know that I ought to have gone over the text once or twice more before sending it to the printer. I wonder whether Macmillans will undertake to publish it, and if they will what the terms of the contract will be. Publishing a book is like bringing a child into the world. The prospect of influencing